

The Infection Post

Invasive Group A Streptococcus (iGAS)

Transmission

- **Direct contact** with body fluids from the nose, throat or wound of an infected person
- **Indirect contact** through shared needles
- **Droplet** transmission when a person coughs or sneezes

Testing

- Nasal, throat, and/or wound swabs must be obtained
- Swabs need to be sent to PHO labs for culture and nucleic acid amplification (NAAT) within 3 days of collection
- Swabs provided by the health unit

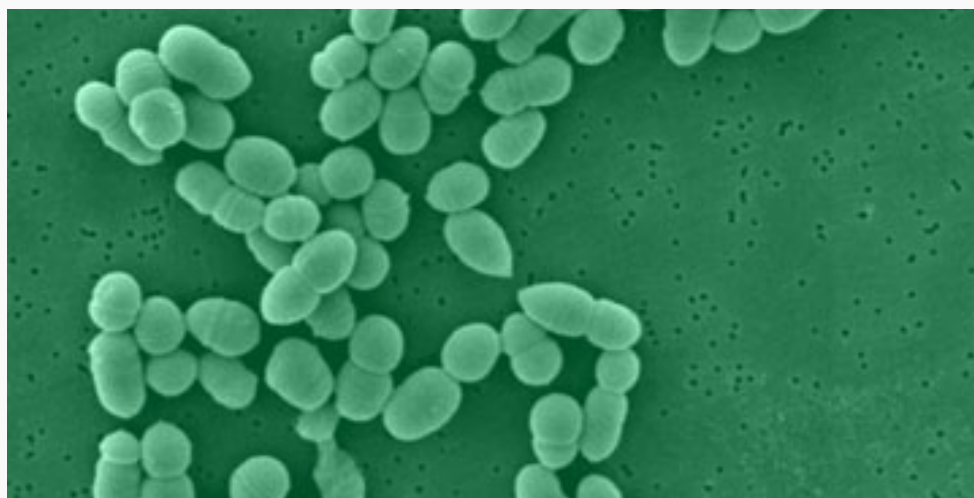
Symptoms

Once the bacteria enters the bloodstream and/or underlying tissues, it causes a severe, rapidly progressing infection that includes:

- High fever
- Sudden, severe pain
- “Flu-like” illness

Prevention Tips

- Strict adherence to hand hygiene practices
- Prompt isolation of suspected and confirmed cases; remove measures after 24 hours of effective antibiotic therapy
- Contact tracing efforts should focus on “high risk” including those who share sleeping quarters, needle sharing, immunocompromised, and over the age of 75
- Adherence to “aseptic” technique for all wound care
- Close contacts should receive prompt antibiotic prophylaxis to prevent severe infections
- Hospital or health-grade disinfectants must be used to clean and disinfect surfaces and rooms
- Safe needle programs and handling



Why Does It Matter?

Fun Fact: Congregate settings are considered the highest risk settings for rapid transmission due to a large group of individuals living in close conditions

- Bacterial infection caused by Group A Streptococcus
- Most infections result in mild illnesses which include pharyngitis. These infections are **not** reportable to the health unit
- When the bacteria is able to move into the bloodstream, it causes severe illness, which can make it life-threatening. These infections **are** reportable to the health unit

Guidance Documents & Resources

- Public Health Ontario (2025). [Appendix N: Clinical Syndromes with Required Level of Precautions](#)
- Public Health Ontario (2026). [Testing Index: Group A Streptococcal Disease](#)
- Toronto Public Health (2024). [Invasive Group A Streptococcus Disease Fact Sheet](#)
- Ottawa Public Health (2025). [Invasive Group A Streptococcal Disease](#)

